



Connecticut
Light & Power

The Northeast Utilities System



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TESTIMONY OF RICHARD A. SODERMAN
THE CONNECTICUT LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY
and YANKEE GAS SERVICES COMPANY
Energy and Technology Committee—Feb.23 2010

H.B. No. 5216 *AN ACT CONCERNING UTILITY TERMINATION FOR HOUSEHOLDS WITH A MEMBER LESS THAN TWENTY-FOUR MONTHS OLD.*

Current law requires that no electric, electric distribution or gas company, no electric supplier and no municipal utility furnishing electricity or gas shall terminate or refuse to reinstate residential electric or gas service where the customer lacks the financial resources to pay his or her entire account and for which customer or a member of the customer's household the termination or failure to reinstate such service would create a life-threatening situation. The proposed bill would add to the protection criteria the condition of a child no more than twenty-four months residing in the customer's household. ***We oppose this proposed bill.***

Non-payment of energy bills is a growing cost of providing service, and it represents a burden on all other customers who must pay for those uncollected service costs. In 2009, uncollectible expenses amounted to 1.15% of revenues for CL&P, and 4.7% for Yankee Gas.

This proposed bill is troublesome for two reasons. First, it will be very difficult or impossible to determine the actual residency of a child in a household, thereby creating an administrative barrier to program implementation. Which agency within the state would determine such residency? Does the child have to remain a resident during the entire time the utility service is restored, or could they move out immediately after service is restored? How long must the child be a resident of the household before it becomes eligible for service reinstatement? Can the child be any child, or does it have to be directly related to the customer seeking utility service?

Second, the proposed bill will ultimately result in higher uncollectibles for utility services and, as a result, require greater subsidies by other customers.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this bill.